

## CLAIMS

1. A vessel charter supporting system for supporting a vessel charter to be entered into between an owner and a charterer, characterized by comprising:

an information terminal for a charterer owned by said charterer;

an information terminal for an owner owned by said owner;

a storage unit for storing predetermined information required for said vessel charter, information entered by said charterer and information entered by said owner; and

a control unit for forming a screen for entering predetermined information or a screen for displaying information based on information entered from said information terminal for a charterer, information entered from said information terminal for an owner and information stored in said storage unit to support conclusion of the vessel charter while causing said information terminal for a charterer and said information terminal for an owner to appropriately display the screens, respectively.

2. The vessel charter supporting system according to claim 1,

characterized in that said screen for entering predetermined information includes an enquiry information entry screen displayed on said information terminal for a charterer for entering enquiry information concerning a vessel that meets conditions with which said charterer

intends to charter the vessel or a predetermined vessel that said charterer intends to charter and causing the owner to present an indication for the enquiry.

3. The vessel charter supporting system according to claim 2,

characterized in that said enquiry information entry screen includes at least one of a screen for making an enquiry not specifying an owner or a screen for making an enquiry specifying at least one owner.

4. The vessel charter supporting system according to claim 2 or claim 3,

characterized in that said screen for entering predetermined information includes a screen for entering indication information for said owner to enter an indication to said enquiry information from said information terminal for an owner and presenting the indication information to said charterer.

5. The vessel charter supporting system according to claim 4,

characterized in that said screen for displaying information includes a screen for displaying indication information for causing said information terminal for a charterer to display an indication from said owner to enquiry information from said charterer.

6. The vessel charter supporting system according to claim 5,

characterized in that, if indications are received from a plurality of owners, the indications are also shown on said screen for displaying indication information.

7. The vessel charter supporting system according to claim 5 or claim 5,

characterized in that said screen for displaying indication information is provided with an expression of intention information entering section for designating an owner with whom the charterer negotiates and expressing an intention for shifting to a negotiation.

8. The vessel charter supporting system according to claim 7,

characterized in that, if expression of intention information for shifting to a negotiation is entered by said expression of intention information entering section, said control unit sends the expression of intention information to said information terminal for an owner in order to cause it to display the information in a predetermined form and, at the same time, sends said expression of intention information to said owner in order to inform it of the information using another information communication form.

9. The vessel charter supporting system according to any one of claims 1 to 8,

characterized in that said control unit causes each of said information terminal for a charterer and said information terminal for an owner to display a screen for entering information for each item of a negotiation in negotiating a vessel charter.

10. The vessel charter supporting system according to claim 9,

characterized in that said screen for entering information for each item of a negotiation is provided with communicating means for displaying contents of the same item of a negotiation entered by the other party of the negotiation and informing to the effect that displayed contents is agreed upon with the other party of a negotiation.

11. The vessel charter supporting system according to claim 9 or claim 10,

characterized in that a list of a plurality of items of a negotiation is also displayed on said screen for entering information for each item of a negotiation and contents of the items of a negotiation agreed upon are displayed in association with each item of a negotiation in the list of the items of a negotiation.

12. The vessel charter supporting system according to claim 11,

characterized in that, if contents of items of a charter agreed upon is displayed in association with all necessary

predetermined items of a negotiation in the above-mentioned items of a negotiation, the displayed contents in the list of the items of a negotiation is regarded as contents of a vessel charter.

13. The vessel charter supporting system according to claim 9 or claim 10,

characterized in that said screen for entering information for each item of a negotiation has a first message entering section for entering a message to be shown to the other party of a negotiation which is not reflected on said contents of a vessel charter and a first message displaying section in which the message entered in said first message entering section is shown to the other party of a negotiation.

14. The vessel charter supporting system according to claim 12 or claim 13,

characterized in that said contents of a vessel charter is contents of a vessel charter with conditions, and said screen for entering predetermined information in said information terminal for a charterer is provided with a conditions lifting entering section for entering to the effect that conditions are lifted with respect to the above-mentioned contents of a vessel charter with conditions, a charter failure entering section for entering to the effect that a charter is failed to be concluded and change entering section for entering to the effect that said contents of a vessel charter with conditions are changed.

15. The vessel charter supporting system according to claim 14,

characterized in that, if change is entered by said change entering section, said control unit causes each of said information terminal for a charterer and said information terminal for an owner to display a change entering screen for entering information for change including at least one of amendment, addition and deletion with respect to said contents of the vessel charter with conditions.

16. The vessel charter supporting system according to claim 15,

characterized in that change information to be entered on said screen for entering change includes addition of a charter clause.

17. The vessel charter supporting system according to claim 16,

characterized in that said screen for entering predetermined information includes a charter clause preparing screen that is displayed on said terminal for a charterer and prepares said charter clause, said storage unit is provided with a first database for storing said prepared charter clause, and an entering of an additional charter clause to be performed on said change entering screen includes a quotation of the charter clause stored in said first database.

18. The vessel charter supporting system according to any one of claims 15 to 17,

characterized in that said change entering screen is provided with a change contents displaying section for displaying said contents of change entered by said other party of a negotiation.

19. The vessel charter supporting system according to claim 18,

characterized in that, among the contents of change to be displayed on said change contents displaying section, a displaying form of at least one of an amended part, an added part and a deleted part is different from a displaying form of parts other than a changed part.

20. The vessel charter supporting system according to any one of claims 15 to 19,

characterized in that said change entering screen is provided with an agreement on change of conditions communicating section for informing said party of a negotiation to the effect that the contents displayed on said contents of change displaying section is agreed upon, and, if the parties of a negotiation mutually agreed, agreed contents of change are reflected on said contents of the vessel charter with conditions.

21. The vessel charter supporting system according to any one of claims 15 to 20,

characterized in that said change entering screen has a second message entering section for entering a message to be shown to the other party of a negotiation which is not reflected on said contents of change and a second message displaying section in which a message entered in said second message entering section is shown to the other party of a negotiation.

22. The vessel charter supporting system according to any one of claims 14 to 21,

characterized in that, if an entering is made by said conditions lifting entering section from said terminal for a charterer, said control unit regards said contents of the vessel charter with conditions as contents of a vessel charter from which conditions are lifted.

23. The vessel charter supporting system, according claim 22,

characterized in that said screen for entering predetermined information in said information terminal for an owner includes a confirmation screen for confirming said contents of a vessel charter from which conditions are lifted if an entering is made by said conditions lifting entering section, and said confirmation screen is provided with a confirmation entering section for entering to the effect that the owner confirmed said contents of a vessel charter from which conditions are lifted and transmits said contents of a vessel charter from which conditions are lifted to said

information terminal for a charterer and said information terminal for an owner if an entering of confirmation is made by said confirmation entering section.

24. The vessel charter supporting system according to any one of claims 1 to 23,

characterized in that said storage unit includes a second database in which position information of a plurality of vessels, and said control unit displays the position information of vessels registered in said second database as a position list based on predetermined information entered from said information terminal for a charterer.

25. The vessel charter supporting system according to claim 24,

characterized in that said position list includes schematic information of each vessel in addition to position information of each of said plurality of vessels and predetermined conditions concerning the contents of said schematic information is set and entered from said information terminal for a charterer, whereby said control unit selectively displays only a vessel that meets said set and entered predetermined conditions from said position list.

26. The vessel charter supporting system according to claim 24 or claim 25,

characterized in that said system further comprises a position information update entering section for updating

position information of a vessel to be displayed as said position list, and said control unit updates said second database based on update information entered by said position information update entering section.

27. The vessel charter supporting system according to any one of claims 24 to 26,

characterized in that said storage unit includes a third database in which detailed information about each vessel that is displayed in said position list is registered, and said position list is provided with a detailed information request instructing section for causing said information terminal for a charterer to display said detailed information about each vessel based on said third database.

28. The vessel charter supporting system according to claim 27,

characterized in that said system further comprises a detailed information update entering section for updating detailed information about said each vessel, and said control unit updates said third database based on update information entered by said detailed information update entering section.

29. The vessel charter supporting system according to claim 27 claim or 28,

characterized in that at least one of said position list and a display screen on which detailed information about each vessel that was displayed in said position list is displayed

is provided with an enquiry information entering section for making an enquiry concerning the displayed vessel.

30. The vessel charter supporting system according to any one of claims 1 to 29,

characterized in that a history concerning a vessel charter entered into between said charterer and said owner is stored in said storage unit.

31. The vessel charter supporting system according to claim 30,

characterized in that said history includes contents of a charter entered into in the past and the history is made displayable appropriately on a screen of each information terminal such that the charterer or the owner can perform a negotiation smoothly.

32. A method of supporting a vessel charter for supporting a vessel charter to be entered into between an owner and a charterer, characterized by comprising the steps of:

an enquiring step of entering an enquiry concerning a vessel that meets conditions with which said charterer intends to charter a vessel or a predetermined vessel that said charterer intends to charter from an information terminal for a charterer and causing the owner to present an indication for the enquiry;

a replying step in which the owner enters an indication to enquiry information from said charterer from an

information terminal for an owner and presents it to the charterer;

a shifting to negotiation step of shifting to a negotiation with a predetermined owner based on said indication information presented by the owner; and

a step in which the charterer and the owner perform a negotiation using an information terminal for a charterer and an information terminal for an owner.

33. The method of supporting a vessel charter according to claim 32,

characterized in that said step of performing a negotiation is provided with:

a first step of displaying a list of a plurality of negotiation items on each of the display screen of said information terminal for a charterer and said information terminal for an owner and at the same time displaying a predetermined screen for entering information for one of items that are not negotiated among said plurality of negotiation items to cause said charterer and said owner to enter contents of the negotiation;

a second step of asking whether or not said charterer and said owner agree on the contents of the negotiation entered by them and causing them to indicate determination of intentions; and

a third step of setting to display the agreed contents of the negotiation with respect to said one negotiation item in said list of the negotiation items in association with said

agreed negotiation items and returning to said first step, and that said step of performing a negotiation repeats said first to the third step to conclude a vessel charter by filling necessary negotiation items in said negotiation items with the contents of the negotiation.

34. The method of supporting a vessel charter according to claim 32 or 33,

characterized in that said concluded vessel charter is a vessel charter with conditions, and the method further comprises:

a situation entering step in which said charterer enters any one of situations in that conditions are lifted, a charter is failed or conditions are to be amended using said information terminal for a charterer to communicate the situation to said owner;

an amendment entering step of displaying a screen for entering predetermined condition information on said information terminal for a charterer and said information terminal for an owner with respect to conditions that said charterer desires to amend to cause said charterer to enter contents of amendment for the conditions if the situation entered above-described entering step is amendment of conditions; and

an intention determining step of entering determination of an intention on whether or not said charterer and said owner agree with each other about the contents of amendment entered by them, and said situation entering step, said amendment

entering step and said intention determining step are repeated until lifting of conditions or failure of a charter is entered in said situation entering step.

35. The method of supporting a vessel charter according to claim 34,

characterized in that, if the situation entered in said situation entering step is lifting of conditions, said contents of a vessel charter with conditions becomes contents of a vessel charter from which conditions are lifted and the method further comprises:

a confirmation entering step in which said owner confirms entering to the effect that said lifting of conditions using said information terminal for an owner with respect to said contents of a vessel charter from which the conditions are lifted; and

a conditions lifted vessel charter contents transmitting step of transmitting said contents of a vessel charter from which the conditions are lifted to said information terminal for a charterer and said information terminal for an owner if an entering of confirmation is made in said confirmation entering step.

36. A server that is used in a vessel charter supporting system for supporting a vessel charter to be entered into between an owner and a charterer using computers and communication lines,

characterized in that the server is used for controlling information communication between an information terminal for a charterer and an information terminal for an owner in procedures for a vessel charter in which said charterer uses said information terminal to make an enquiry concerning a vessel meeting conditions for chartering a vessel or a predetermined vessel that said charterer intends to charter and said owner uses said information terminal for an owner to make an indication to the enquiry from said charterer, and the process shifts to a negotiation step based on indication information from said owner, where said charterer and said owner performs a negotiation.

37. A database that is used in a vessel charter supporting system for supporting a vessel charter to be entered into between an owner and a charterer using computers and communication lines,

characterized in that it is used for storing predetermined information required for a vessel charter, information entered by said charterer and information entered by said owner in procedures for a vessel charter in which said charterer uses said information terminal to make an enquiry concerning a vessel meeting conditions for chartering a vessel or a predetermined vessel that said charterer intends to charter and said owner uses said information terminal for an owner to make an indication to the enquiry from said charterer, and the process shifts to a negotiation step based

on indication information from said owner, where said charterer and said owner performs a negotiation.

38. A program for supporting a vessel charter to be entered into between an owner and a charterer using computers and communication lines,

characterized in that the program causes the computers to execute:

an enquiring step of entering an enquiry concerning a vessel that meets conditions with which said charterer intends to charter a vessel or a predetermined vessel that said charterer intends to charter from an information terminal for a charterer and causing the owner to present an indication for the enquiry;

a replying step in which the owner enters an indication to enquiry information from said charterer and presents it to the charterer;

a shifting to negotiation step of shifting to a negotiation with a predetermined owner based on the indication information presented by said owner; and

a step in which the charterer and the owner perform a negotiation using an information terminal for a charterer and an information terminal for an owner.

39. The program for supporting a vessel charter according to claim 37,

characterized in that said negotiation step comprises:

a first step of displaying a list of a plurality of negotiation items on each of the display screen of said information terminal for a charterer and said information terminal for an owner and at the same time displaying a predetermined screen for entering information for one of items that are not negotiated among said plurality of negotiation items to cause said charterer and said owner to enter contents of the negotiation;

a second step of asking whether or not said charterer and said owner agree on the contents of the negotiation entered by them and causing them to indicate determination of intentions; and

a third step of setting to display the agreed contents of the negotiation with respect to said one negotiation item in said list of the negotiation items in association with said agreed negotiation items and returning to said first step, and that said negotiation step repeats said first to the third step to conclude a vessel charter by filling necessary negotiation items in said negotiation items with the contents of the negotiation.

40. The program for supporting a vessel charter according to claim 38 or claim 39,

characterized in that said concluded vessel charter is a vessel charter with conditions and the program further comprises:

a situation entering step in which said charterer enters any one of situations in that conditions are lifted, a charter

is failed or conditions are to be amended using said information terminal for a charterer to communicate the situation to said owner;

an amendment entering step of displaying a screen for entering predetermined condition information on said information terminal for a charterer and said information terminal for an owner with respect to conditions that said charterer desires to amend to cause said charterer to enter contents of amendment for the conditions if the situation entered in said situation entering step is amendment of conditions; and

an intention determining step of entering determination of an intention on whether or not said charterer and said owner agree with each other about the contents of amendment entered by them, and said situation entering step, said amendment entering step and said intention determining step are repeated until lifting of conditions or failure of a charter is entered in said situation entering step.

41. The program for supporting a vessel charter according to claim 40,

characterized in that, if the situation entered in said situation entering step is lifting of conditions, said contents of a vessel charter with conditions becomes contents of a vessel charter from which conditions are lifted and the method further comprises:

a confirmation entering step in which said owner confirms entering to the effect that said lifting of conditions using

said information terminal for an owner with respect to said contents of a vessel charter from which the conditions are lifted; and

a conditions lifted vessel charter contents transmitting step of transmitting said contents of a vessel charter from which the conditions are lifted to said information terminal for a charterer and said information terminal for an owner if an entering of confirmation is made in said confirmation entering step.

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